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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 001390

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NSC FOR MGAVIN, LETIM

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SUBJECT: GNU FOREIGN MINISTER MEETS WITH U.S. COMMISSION ON
INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

REF: KHARTOUM 1376

Classified By: CDA ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD, FOR REASONS 1.4 B AND D.

¶1. (C) Summary: The Government of National Unity (GNU) Minister of Foreign Affairs Deng Alor commented on the National Congress Party's (NCP) relationship with the United States during a December 9 meeting with the visiting U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF). Alor, who is a member of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), told the USCIRF delegation, the DCM and POLOFF that the U.S. should take a tougher stance with the NCP. Alor expressed concern over three bills the NCP planned to table at the GNU Council of Ministers on December 10, but acknowledged that every outstanding issue might not be resolved. During the meeting, he took a call from the Chinese Foreign Minister and, in a lengthy conversation, sought Chinese assistance in implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and reconstruction of the South. End Summary.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S.

¶2. (C) Alor said in the December 9 meeting with the USCIRF delegation that he had been disappointed there had not been more concrete results from recent trilateral discussions organized by Special Envoy for Sudan Gration. The lack of results, according to Alor, was attributable to the NCP's unwillingness to be seen as make concessions to what it regarded as hard-liners in the U.S. Congress. Alor opined that the NCP wanted U.S. recognition and viewed good relations with the U.S. as an opening to European, as well as other, doors. He noted, however, that the NCP also wanted the U.S. to make the first move with concessions on its side.

¶3. (C) Alor asserted that more pressure on the Government of Sudan (GOS) from the U.S. and the international community, including African Union countries, was necessary in order to achieve full implementation of the CPA. He said that, in his view, further international isolation of the GOS might be necessary. He noted that the cooperation of regional African countries would be especially beneficial, and that Egypt could quietly help to achieve greater results in bringing about such implementation.

BILLS BEING TABLED BY NCP

¶4. (C) Alor echoed concerns heard previously from Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS) Vice President Riek Machar on NCP plans to table three controversial bills at the Council of Ministers on December 10. Alor said he had only just received, and had not had time to fully analyze, NCP drafts of the Southern Sudan Referendum bill, the Abyei Referendum

bill and the Popular Consultations bill for Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. He acknowledged that the SPLM would not be able to insist on resolution of all its difference on pieces of legislation with the NCP. Nevertheless, he insisted that the two sides must come to agreement on the three bills being fast-tracked by the NCP, along with the Security and Elections Laws, as these were essential to conduct the April 2010 elections and the January 2011 Referendum.

PHONE CALL FROM CHINESE

15. (C) Midway through the meeting, Alor took a call in the same room from the Chinese Foreign Minister. In a lengthy conversation, Alor was overheard asking for China's assistance in CPA implementation and its active involvement in reconstruction of Southern Sudan. Deng asked the Chinese FM to play a more central role in bringing the NCP and SPLM together in resolving their differences. He noted that if agreements between the two sides could not be reached, "it is likely the country could fall back into war."

16. (C) Alor also told the Chinese FM that the SPLM had concerns regarding China's close relationship with the NCP. He recounted how in a recent meeting between SPLM Secretary General Pagan Amum and a Chinese delegation, Amum had reminded the Chinese that their interest in Sudan appeared primarily to be as a source for oil. Amum added that as 90 percent of Sudan's oil was in the South, China needed to establish closer ties with the GOSS sooner rather than later

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(Note: Most oil sector analysts believe the South has 80% of the country's oil. End note.) The delegation, DCM and POLOFF could not hear the Chinese FM's side of the conversation. However, it was apparent that the primary purpose for the latter's call was to ask for Sudan's help, as chair of the Group of 77, in marshaling support for China's position on climate change during the upcoming conference in Copenhagen. Alor was noncommittal in responding to this request.

17. (C) Comment: Diplomatic sources in Khartoum have suggested that Deng Alor may be open to compromise on his long-standing insistence that all bills currently before the Council of Ministers be resolved concurrently (reftel). His admission during the meeting that the Joint Integrated Units (JIUs) require further discussion outside of the current short legislative time frame confirms that Alor may permit the Abyei citizenship question to be resolved by the Abyei Commission, as the latest NCP bill proposes. However, with only a week left in the current National Assembly session, it is crucial for the parties to work together to reach a conclusion on the remaining issues at hand, as they are central to progress on the CPA. As to his conversation with the Chinese FM, Alor could have easily taken the call in another room. It is likely that he wanted the delegation and embassy officers to overhear his appeal for Chinese support on CPA implementation. End Comment.

WHITEHEAD